year 1994-95, 1995-96 and 1996-97, 158780, 142685 and 51521 (upto November, 196) wells respectively were constructed; Draught Prone Areas Programme (DRAP) under which an expenditure of Rs. 1742 crores had been incurred upto 1994-95 on treatment of areas under the core sector activities of land development water resource development and afforestation of 57.29 lakhs hectares of land; Desert Development Programme (DDP), under which an expenditure of Rs. 595.51 crores had been incurred upto 1994-95 on core activities on 5.52 lakh hectares of land.

3. The Central and the various State Governments have taken up several insurance and social security schemes like Group Insurance Scheme for Landless Agricultural Labourers in 1987 under the Social Security Fund being operated by the LIC for providing insurance cover to all landless agricultural labourers in the age group of 18—60 years and the Insurance Scheme for IRDP beneficiaries in 1980. Besides, State Governments are running old age pension schemes with varying eligibility criteria and pension rates. The Government have also adopted a multi-dimenstional course of action to further improve the socio-economic conditions of agricultural labourers by improving infrastructural facilities, diversification to non-farm activities continued operation of various skill improvement, poverty alleviation, development and financial assistance programmes. Total allocation for rural development during the VIIIth Plan was 30,000 crores as against 16500 crores for the VIIth Plan.

Non-Payment of Statutory Dues

2208. **SHRIMATI CHANDRA KALA PANDEY:**
SHRI DIPANKAR MUKHERJEE:

Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether 50 MPs had submitted a memorandum on 5th August, 1997 to the then Prime Minister on the issue of non-payment of statutory dues to the workers of CPSUs; and

(b) if so, the action taken so far to clear the dues?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR (DR. SATYANARAYAN JATIYA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Government constituted a Group of Ministers (GOM) to study the problems of non-payment of statutory dues to workers employed in CPSUs and to evolve a strategy for liquidation of these arrears. The GOM met on 29.8.97. However, no final recommendations could be made by the GOM with the dissolution of the Parliament. The present Govt. has apprised of the problem. A provision of Rs. 1482 crores has been made in the Union Budget for 1998-99 for non-plan loans to public sector enterprises mainly for payment of salaries and wages to employees of sick and convalescent PSUs.

Fresh look to define 'Industry'

2209. **SHRI JALALUDIN ANSARI:**
SHRI J. CHITHARANJAN:

Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news-item appearing in the Times of India dated the 13th March, 1998 under the caption "SC recommends fresh look at definition of Industry"; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR (DR. SATYANARAYAN JATIYA): (a) and (b) The Division Bench of the Supreme Court in Civil Appeal Nos. 1720 & 1721 of 1990 in respect of Coir Board Ernakulam, Cochin & Another Vs. Indira Devi P.S. & Others had decided on 4.3.98 that the matter regarding definition of "industry" under the I.D. Act be placed before the Hon'ble Chief Justice of India to consider whether a larger

bench should be constituted to reconsider the decision of that court in Bangalore Water Supply and Sewerage Board etc. Vs. A. Rajappa and Others.

Insurgency Activities in Assam

2210. DR. ARUN KUMAR SARMA: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government agree that major cause for insurgency activities in the State of Assam is the unemployment problem;

(b) if so, the details of steps being taken or proposed to be taken to create job opportunities for unemployed youths in the State;

(c) the details of basic infrastructure being developed so far or proposed to be developed to create job opportunities both in the private and public sector;

(d) whether any survey for identifying various sectors that are feasible for viable and sustaining job oriented programmes suitable to the region was made;

(e) if so, the details thereof and action taken thereon; and

(f) if not, the reasons therefor and future plan in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR (DR. SATYANARAYAN JATIYA): (a) Unemployment has also contributed towards insurgency activities in the State of Assam.

(b) and (c) Some of the Steps taken includes:

(i) Industrial policy in North East;

(ii) Prime Minister's economic package announced in October, 1996;

(iii) Recruitment to the Railways through the local Employment Exchanges particularly for Group D category;

(iv) Special recruitment drives in Army/Para-Military Forces;

(v) Power Grid Corporation of India Ltd. has also launched special Recruitment drive, North Eastern Electric Power Corporation Ltd. (NEEPCOP) has introduced special scheme to impart training to graduate engineers;

(vi) Setting up of Assam Gas Cracker Project in a joint venture with Assam Industrial Development Corporation and Reliance Industries;

(vii) Setting up of the three Industrial Growth Centres in Assam etc.

(d) to (f) No specific survey was carried out by the Government. However, the Finance Minister in his Central Government. However, the Finance Minister in his Central Government Budget speech for 1998-99 has indicated that

(1) Government have decided to restructure the North Eastern Council (NEC) for speedy implementation of important infrastructural programmes in this region.

(2) It has been decided that a non-lapsable Central Resource Pool will be created for deposit of funds from all Ministries where the plan expenditure on the North Eastern region is less than 10 per cent of the total plan allocation of the Ministry. The difference between 10 per cent of the allocation and the actual expenditure incurred on the North Eastern region will be transferred to the Central Pool, which will be used for funding specific programmes for economic and social upliftment of the North Eastern States.

(3) It is proposed that the refinancing function for industrial loans of State Financial Corporation (SFC) and Industrial Development Corporation (IDC) institution will be undertaken henceforth by North Eastern Development Finance Corporation Limited (NEDFI).